

Five Traits of Kingdom Citizens—Part 5

"Forgiveness"

Matthew 18:21-35

I. The P_____ (vs. 21-22)

- a. Peter's question actually shows he was paying attention and could be seen as generous considering the Rabbis taught you only needed to forgive some 3 times (cf. Amos 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:6; Job 33:29; Talmud: *Yoma* 86b, 87a)
- b. But Peter's question showed that he was coming from the perspective of Law instead of the Principle of Grace.
- c. Whether you translate it "**seventy seven**" or "**seventy times seven**" (490) the point is still the same, it's too high a number to keep track of; or in other words forgiveness for Christians has no limits (cf. Rom. 5:20; 1 Cor. 13:5)
- d. Jesus does teach however in Luke's Gospel that full Christian forgiveness requires repentance (cf. Luke 17:3-4)

II. The P_____ (vs. 23-34)

- a. Details:
 - i. This Parable is not to hide deep truth from the unbelieving crowds as in Matthew 13; it is to explain truth to His disciples
 - ii. **kingdom of heaven** = the church age
 - iii. **king** = Jesus
 - iv. **slaves** = Believers
 - v. **settle accounts** does not equal final judgment
- b. **ten thousand talents** is impossible to fully quantify by today's standards; but again the main point is that it was unpayable
- c. The **slave** humbled himself like a sinner seeking forgiveness
- d. The king graciously **released** (loosed) him and **forgave** his **debt**!

- e. But the 1st slave choked a fellow slave for a much smaller debt and refused to release and forgive him even when he reacted the same way as him (sound familiar???)
 - i. Note that the 100 denarii was not an insignificant debt, just like the sins we commit against one another, but it paled in comparison to the much larger debt owed the king!
- f. **fellow slaves** = the church who take concerns in prayer to God and act on His behalf.
- g. The king calls him a **wicked slave** because he had experienced such grace and did learn from it (cf. Matt. 11:20-24; Luke 12:48ff)
- h. Righteous anger is a godly trait, but we cannot handle it properly (cf. Eph. 4:26-27)
- i. The slave is not cast into hell, instead he is turned over to the **torturers** or **jailers** to discipline him
 - i. (**basanistēs** (βασανιστής) = "a person serving as a guard in a prison, whose function was to torture prisoners as a phase of judicial examination—'prison guard, torturer.'")
- j. The king does not reinstate the original debt of the 1st slave, he only needs to confess and repent from his unforgiveness

III. The P_____ (v. 35)

- a. Jesus is not talking about working for or losing our salvation; He is explaining that God expects us to live with our brothers and sisters within the church in light of the grace we have received in Christ Jesus (cf. Matt. 6:14-15; John 13:10; Rom. 8:1, 38; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13; 1 John 1:9)